

# NEWS RELEASE

**OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY  
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF ILLINOIS**

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***For Immediate Release***

**FEBRUARY 10, 2005**

Ronald J. Tenpas, United States Attorney for the Southern District of Illinois, announced today that on January 7, 2005, and January 28, 2005, **CHARLES E. MORSE**, age 19, and **JOSHUA T. SMITH**, age 25, both of Grand Tower, Illinois, were sentenced in United States District Court in Benton, Illinois. MORSE and SMITH had previously pled guilty to conspiracy to manufacture 50 grams or more of methamphetamine. MORSE was sentenced to 63 months' imprisonment, 4 years' supervised release, and was fined \$150. SMITH was sentenced to 135 months' imprisonment, 5 years' supervised release, and was fined \$300. Both MORSE and SMITH received enhanced sentences because they involved juveniles in their offenses.

The violations took place between February 2002, and May 18, 2004, in Grand Tower, Illinois. Co-defendants MICHAEL R. CRANE, AIMEE DANIELLE BYRAM and CINDY J. SIMS have pled guilty to their involvement in the methamphetamine conspiracy and are awaiting sentencing. Co-defendants JAMES D. CLOVER, WILLIAM E. GOLLIHER, JR., MICHAEL L. REED, KENNETH W. DEROSSETT, a/k/a "Spaz," and HARLEY LIBBERT have pled not guilty and are awaiting a March 7, 2005, jury trial. Under the law, a defendant is presumed to be innocent of a charge until proved guilty beyond a reasonable doubt to the satisfaction of a jury.

The investigation was conducted by the Jackson County Sheriff's Office, Grand Tower Police Department, Southern Illinois Enforcement Group and Drug Enforcement Administration pursuant to their participation in the Jackson County Project Safe Neighborhoods Initiative. Under the Project Safe Neighborhoods Initiative, federal, state, and local law enforcement and prosecutors are working together to prosecute drug dealers, felons in possession of firearms, and criminals that use firearms to commit violent offenses or drug trafficking offenses. The Jackson County Project Safe Neighborhoods Initiative is a joint and cooperative effort of the United States Attorney's Office, Jackson County States Attorney's Office, Drug Enforcement Administration, Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms, Carbondale Police Department, Jackson County Sheriff's Office, Murphysboro Police Department, and Southern Illinois Enforcement Group.

The case is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Amanda A. Robertson.